

Office of Naval Records and History
Ships' Histories Section
Navy Department

HISTORY OF USS TAUTOG (SS 199)

TAUTOG was the second of three submarines of the 1938 program built by the Electric Boat Company at Groton, Connecticut, where her keel was laid on 1 March 1939. She and her sister ships, TAMBOR and THRESHER, were the beginning of the ten-tube class of submarine. The TAUTOG was named for a medium-sized market fish found on the North Atlantic Coast from Chesapeake Bay northward. She was launched on 27 January 1940 with the traditional champagne administered by Mrs. Richard S. Edwards, wife of Captain Edwards, Commanding Officer of the Submarine Base, New London, Connecticut.

Commissioned on 3 July 1940, TAUTOG was skippered by Lieutenant J.H. Willingham who started the sub on a long illustrious career. After commissioning the submarine had a short training period in Long Island Sound and then departed on a shakedown cruise which lasted from 6 September to 11 November 1940. She visited San Juan, Puerto Rico; Mobile, Alabama (home of the skipper); Savannah, Georgia; Brownsville, Texas; and Annapolis, Maryland before returning to New London.

Final trials were held in early December after which TAUTOG underwent a six-week overhaul at Portsmouth. After overhaul, the submarine worked out of New London, Connecticut on a ten-tube mine-laying problem, and TAUTOG may be considered as the founder of the mine plant doctrine.

Early in February 1941 TAUTOG was suddenly ordered, along with the submarine THRESHER, to Saint Thomas in the Virgin Islands. It was a special mission and no one knew what was happening. She remained there for about six weeks operating from a Sub Base which consisted of a partial dock, two or three buildings and a gleam in the constructor's eye. While in St. Thomas, TAUTOG received orders to join the Atlantic Fleet at Great Culebra, P.R., in paying homage to Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox. TAUTOG escorted THRESHER, who was transporting important naval personnel. After her return to Saint Thomas, TAUTOG received orders early one morning to join the fleet. Off New York, TAUTOG and THRESHER were detached from the fleet disposition and ordered to Newport, Rhode Island, where operations were conducted for several weeks.

Late in April 1941, TAUTOG returned to New London for loading, and was put on six hours notice. On 1 May TAMBOR, THRESHER and TAUTOG set course for Pearl Harbor, stopping at Coco Solo and San Diego en-route. The three submarines arrived at Pearl Harbor on 6 June and TAUTOG operated with task forces out of Pearl Harbor, made ten-day patrols around the Hawaiian Islands, and conducted such experiments as determining how long it would take for a "boat" to fuel and provision and arrive at Midway.

On 21 October TAUTOG received sealed orders to patrol off Midway for 45 days with THRESHER. The sub was submerged for 15 to 16 hours per day for thirty-eight consecutive days. Most provisions ran out

and the patrol was one of the hardest on personnel that TAUTOG ever made. She returned to Pearl Harbor on 5 December 1941 just in time for the fireworks of 7 December. As a result of her last pre-war activities TAUTOG was in need of a refit period. It was three weeks before she was ready to go out on her first war patrol.

The day after Christmas 1941, TAUTOG made a tour of the Marshall Islands. The duration of this patrol was 41 days, of which 26 were spent in the patrol area. It was principally a reconnaissance patrol during which much valuable information was gathered on Kwajalein-an island later to be captured and used as a stepping stone in the advance to the Japanese Empire. This was the only patrol in the career of TAUTOG in which no shipping was claimed sunk, although a possible hit was scored on a medium sized freighter on 13 January 1942. However, TAUTOG is considered to have fulfilled her mission admirably with the personnel aboard deserving of special credit.

Her first war patrol ended on 4 February 1942, and TAUTOG went to Mare Island for a quick overhaul. On 9 April she again set a westward course. The second war patrol commenced with TAUTOG's departure from Pearl Harbor on 24 April, to be conducted in the Marshall Islands. While en route to her station, TAUTOG sighted a periscope on 26 April near Johnson Island. The Japanese sub was obviously opening range preparatory to firing. The officer of the deck put the rudder hard right and called the crew to battle stations. When the stern tubes were on target one torpedo was fired. The torpedo either hit the sub or exploded directly over it which resulted in its sinking. A Navy patrol plane flying nearby was contacted by searchlight to investigate and confirm the sinking.

Immediately after arrival in the Marshalls, TAUTOG was ordered to Truk to pick off stragglers from the Coral Sea. In the early darkness of 15 May a darkened ship was tracked for an attack. Just before reaching a firing bearing, it grew light enough to reveal the markings of a hospital ship and no attack was made, although the International Convention had been violated. If the ship really were a hospital ship its sinking would have been their own fault for not putting lights on.

On 17 May propellers of a submarine were heard and a Japanese submarine soon sighted. Four minutes later TAUTOG fired a spread of two torpedoes. One detonation was heard and upon returning to periscope depth five minutes later, no trace of the Japanese submarine was found. However, TAUTOG was not officially credited with sinking this submarine. Another submarine was sighted later in the morning with the marking I-28 on her conning tower. One of two torpedoes fired disabled the Japanese sub, and TAUTOG generously administered the third, which hit and sank the sub.

Two steamers were sighted departing Truk on the afternoon of 22 May. A submerged sound attack was made which damaged the 5461 ton cargo ship, SANKO MARU. The other vessel, apparently an armed naval auxiliary, searched the area thoroughly but withdrew when she was unable to locate the sub. A pursuit of the second steamer was spoiled by aircraft in the vicinity and TAUTOG steamed to the westward.

On 25 May upon sighting smoke on the horizon to the south, TAUTOG closed in to track a target and gain a position ahead of her. A submerged

attack at periscope depth sent the 4,467 ton miscellaneous auxiliary, SHUKA MAHU to the bottom. This was the last action on the patrol and brought the total tonnage sunk on this patrol to 7,644 tons. The patrol ended when the sub stood into Fremantle on 11 June.

On 17 July TAUTOG departed Fremantle on her third war patrol for an area off the coast of French Indo China. Hunting was not too good in this area for the sub, although she did sink a large naval auxiliary. It was too dark for a periscope attack and too light for a surface approach on the morning of 6 August when the ship came into view. Three torpedoes were fired after a sound approach set up the target. The first torpedo ripped into the ship, followed 6 seconds later by the second torpedo exploding the target. The third torpedo missed but it made little difference. An investigation of the surface revealed an oil slick about a mile wide and several miles long, with debris floating all around. It was the last evidence of the 5,873 ton army cargo ship, OTTIO MARU.

Return to Fremantle was made via Apo East Pass and the Makassar Strait. Forty-five days of the 56 day patrol were spent in the patrol area and TAUTOG tied up at Fremantle on 10 September 1942. A refit took place at Albany, south of Fremantle, alongside USS HOLLAND, and the crew overhauled the main engines and auxiliary machinery before a period of rest and recuperation.

TAUTOG returned to Fremantle early in October, loaded mines and left on her fourth war patrol on 8 October, which was a combination mining and torpedo patrol. On 20 October the outline of a vessel ahead was dimly seen through the rain. A quick dive and submerged approach showed the vessel to be a diesel fishing schooner of about 75-tons. The sub made battle surface, closed the range and brought the schooner to by arching two shots across her bow. The schooner broke the Japanese colors and hoisted a signal. On closing the schooner it was found that she had a Japanese crew with four Filipinos aboard. After some encouragement, the Filipinos swam over and came aboard TAUTOG.

The Japanese were ordered to take to their boats, of which there were three on the forecastle, but they showed considerable reluctance to expose themselves. Three rounds of 3-inch shells fired into the stern disabled the rudder and propeller and convinced them that it was not a game of hide and seek. One boat was launched and the Japanese were given water and directed to the nearest land after indicating that no one else was aboard the schooner. However, when TAUTOG opened fire to sink the schooner, several other Japanese scrambled out, and ten rounds fired into the hull left only the burning bow and pilot house above water.

Typhoon weather on 24, 25 and 26 October was enemy enough for TAUTOG, but the following day she again took on the enemy. A passenger-freighter was tracked until dark when TAUTOG jolted her with two torpedoes. A fire started in the after part of the ship and the bow went up into the air and the ship sank in a few minutes. The next day another ship was attacked but the hits turned out to be duds and escort vessels gave TAUTOG a thorough working over. Light globes were shattered and several small leaks developed as paint flaked off and minor damage about the sub resulted.

Bad weather plagued TAUTOG during the patrol but a break in the wind and seas gave the sub and opportunity to plant her mines on 2 Nov. During the planting, several mines exploded and gavethe sub a considerable jolt as water shot up in columns estimated at over 200 feet. It was just after midnight when TAUTOG completed planting all mines.

The fighting career of TAUTOG almost ended on 11 November when a torpedo sent after a passenger-freighter missed the target and alerted the anti-submarine escort vessel. As the TAUTOG went deep her sound gear went dead, so no definite evasive maneuvers could be made. Suddenly propellers were heard through the hull and before any action could be taken, the first depth charge exploded with such violence that it felt like a physical blow. Four more explosions followed and men were bodily thrown about like dice in a dice cup. Lights broke and there were flashes from electric arcs. The concussion was very severe. Flooding commenced and the list of damage done is too long to include in this history. TAUTOG had received a beating that few submariners had lived to tell about.

On 28 November 1942, Lieutenant Commander W.B. Sieglaff relieved Lieutenant Commander J.H. Willingham as skipper of the TAUTOG. "Captain Barney" was the second of the three skippers to fight with TAUTOG and he was to continue the record of the sub that was building a reputation for never coming back empty-handed, and always COMING BACK!

Underway from Fremantle on 15 December 1942, the TAUTOG proceeded to her area for the fifth war patrol, which was to take her to Timor, Ambon, Band and the Flores Sea, Staring Bay Kendari, Saleier Straits and Saleier Island. After 1941 TAUTOG never spent a Christmas in port, and Christmas of 1942 wascelebrated in a new way for all aboard. An enemy passenger-cargo vessel was tracked from the night before into the morning. The target looked like a big black mass in the periscope and the bow tubes were ready to fire when a collision course was indicated, forcing TAUTOG to dive under the ship and give her Christmas greetings with the stern torpedo tubes. The Japanese ship was clearly outlined in the moonlight and at 0306 the sub fired one, two and three torpedoes and listened as 63 seconds ticked off. Loud explosions made the ocean tremble and the ship's screws stopped immediately as black smoke enveloped her. The 1,000 ton army cargo vessel BANSU MARU #2 was heavily damaged.

In the evening a ship which appeared to be a small freighter with escort attracted the sub and an approach was attempted. Both vessels suddenly turned toward TAUTOG and she realized who was approaching whom. The larger ship was an anti-submarine vessel with patrol craft which rounded out a team that was "out to get" the likes of TAUTOG. The "working over" which resulted made the crew glad that Christmas comes but once a year.

A sailboat was sighted on 5 January as TAUTOG was standing through Buton Passage en route to Ambon. The boat was approached with all machine guns manned and the sail was ordered lowered by hand signals. About 12 nervous Mohammedans were counted on board who hoisted a Japanese flad in the apparent belief that it would explain everything.

The flag was lowered and brought aboard the sub along with the ship's papers, and all hands were ordered off preparatory to sinking the ship. About four women were discovered in the sailboat with small babies, one of them only about a month old. A live rooster was tied on the bowsprit by its feet with about six chickens and a goat on the forecastle.

Dutch papers dating back to 1930 with Japanese clearances on various ports during the past year indicated that the boat was a sea-going home for a tribal family. The papers were kept and the men ordered back on board. An old patriarch on the sailboat with a small baby in his arms and a fez hat on his head gave a respectful salute when he realized that they were not going to be molested.

On 9 January 1943 TAUTOG fired three torpedoes at NATORI, a Japanese light cruiser. One, and possibly two, hits were scored. After the first hit the cruiser became dead in the water, but shortly thereafter got underway. She was laying down such a terrific 5" barrage that it was impossible for TAUTOG to track her for more shots.

While passing through Saleier Strait TAUTOG sighted a Japanese freighter and gained a position ahead of her base course to fire a spread of three torpedoes. In less than a minute the first explosion sent up a plume of water and a yellowish blue flame just forward of the stack. The ship, shihouetted in the moonlight, was easily observed as the second torpedo ripped into her side. The 1,873 ton freighter sank quickly with much noise and numerous explosions.

While returning from patrol on 23 January TAUTOG was sighted on the surface in Tiger Passage by an enemy destroyer. All torpedoes had been expended, so she went deep and rigged for the forthcoming depth charging. The ensuing two attacks were close, but the sub maneuvered away and eventually lost the destroyer. An anticlimax to this was an incident in which the sub was caught in a whirlpool near Ambon and carried to a depth of 150 feet in an instant. The patrol ended on a happy note, for the "Terrible T" pulled into Fremantle safely on 30 January 1943.

A refit period at Fremantle was completed alongside USS PELIAS, and TAUTOG started out on her sixth war patrol on 24 February. Her patrol area was around Makassar Straits, north of the Malay Barrier and around Balikpapan. On 10 March she wrecked a sampan, and the next day put several holes in the bottom of a sailboat, and left it filling with water. A grounded tanker was sighted on 17 March with topside damage from an air attack. The ship was on an even keel and it was decided that a well-placed torpedo would remove any doubts as to her further utility. One torpedo near the stern caused a beautiful explosion. The ship took a port list and settled by the stern as black smoke billowed up from the wreckage. On 18 March she sank a schooner.

A convoy of five ships in two columns was sighted on 9 April which resulted in four torpedoes streaking through the water from TAUTOG. Explosion indicated hits on at least two ships, which finally resulted in the sinking of the 1,950 ton destroyer ISONAMI and the 5,214 ton Army cargo ship PENANG MARU.

During the seventh war patrol, TAUTOG covered areas around the Flores Sea, Gulf of Boni, Molukka Sea, Celebes Sea and Moru Gulf. The sub got underway from Fremantle on 11 May to proceed to Exmouth for final preparations and departed for her patrol area. On 20 May the TAUTOG had her first opportunity to attack. A small motor wampan was sighted near Pulasi Island and judiciously worked over with 5-inch shells and 20 millimeter fire until it was left in a sinking condition.

A spread of three torpedoes was sent after a Japanese cargo ship on 6 June off the entrances to Basilan Strait. Twenty seconds after the first torpedo was fired a yellowish green flash ripped up the center of the target. The loud noise of one of the ship's pumps established the ship's position after TAUTOG submerged. The pump finally wheezed to a gradual stop and the familiar breaking-up noises of a sinking ship followed. When TAUTOG later surfaced, much debris was found on the surface, with oil drums in the water. She had sunk the 970 ton cargo ship, SHINEJ MARU. On 20 June she sank the MEITEN MARU, 4474 ton Navy miscellaneous auxiliary;

During the patrol there were three gun attacks and seven torpedo attacks, several of which were unsuccessful because of faulty torpedo performance. TAUTOG returned to San Francisco via Midway and Pearl Harbor for a navy yard overhaul and a well-deserved rest. The overhaul was given by the Hunter's Point Navy Yard, where numerous improvements and alterations brought TAUTOG up-to-date. After training on the West Coast and in the Hawaiian Area, she departed on 7 October for her eighth war patrol, which took place in the area around Palau.

On 22 October TAUTOG surfaced at sunset near Fais Island to bombard a large phosphate plant. The first five shells hit at a point where radio masts, small buildings and a derrick were located. At least 18 shells were direct hits on large buildings and considerable black smoke ascended over the target.

The torpedoes aboard TAUTOG were expended in thirteen days with the net result not too clear but believed to be that a SUBMARINE CHASER # 30 sank and several ships were damaged. With all torpedoes expended, the sub trailed a convoy against which she had made a damaging attack, and for two days sent contact reports which enabled another submarine to make a successful attack.

Arriving at Midway on 18 November, the sub underwent a refit period which started her out on the ninth war patrol on 12 December 1943. In spite of the active anti-submarine patrols in the Empire area, TAUTOG conducted a very successful patrol. On 27 December two spreads of three torpedoes each were fired at a freighter and a passenger ship. Escort vessels immediately went after TAUTOG, forcing her to dive and miss appraising the damage of the torpedo hits. A first class depth charging lasted for four hours, during which 89 charges were sent down to destroy TAUTOG.

On 3 January a 3,000 ton freighter was tracked off the mouth of the Kumano Kawa River one-half mile from a seawall. TAUTOG fired a spread of three torpedoes, swung around toward deep water and ran up the periscope to see what would happen. An explosion obscured the ship from sight as debris leaped into the air. The SAISHU MARU, 2082 tons, blew up in full view of a local town. It was most regrettable that this excellent show was prematurely interrupted, but the urgency of this interruption was most convincing, as the sound of high speed propellers, the sight of a patrol plane, and aircraft bombs exploding nearby will attest.

A radar contact on the following day started TAUTOG tracking a large Japanese Maru. A spread of six torpedoes scored four hits just as an escort vessel headed toward the sub and fired deck guns. A last look at the Maru showed her broken in the middle with her bow and stern in the air. After clearing the scene, a series of explosions from the direction of the target lit up the sky like heat lightning. The ship sunk was the 3943 ton, USA MARU.

During the night of 11 January, contact was made with two freighters with escorts. Three torpedoes streaked toward the first and biggest ship and a fourth stern tube shot went after the smaller ship. TAUTOG was forced deep again by the escort vessels but an explosion indicated a hit on the first freighter and the second explosion was timed right for the second freighter. The screws on both ships stopped and considerable breaking-up noises were heard from the target direction. A series of 22 depth charges reached down for TAUTOG in vain. Later reports failed to substantiate a sinking, but listed the KOGYO MARU as having sustained medium damage.

TAUTOG returned to Pearl Harbor at the end of her ninth patrol and underwent a refit period alongside USS BUSHNELL. During this time Lieutenant Commander T.S. Baskett reported aboard as prospective commanding officer of the sub.

The tenth war patrol was conducted in the Kurile Islands Area and off the Northeast coast of Hokkaido, Japan. The only personnel casualty of TAUTOG history came when the sub was entering the patrol area on 5 March 1944. While doing some emergency work on deck, Laramee, MoMM2c, was lost overboard when a wave swept over the deck. A heaving line and buoy was thrown to him but he soon disappeared from view. A search light was rigged in spite of being within the range of enemy aircraft, and the sub maneuvered in the vicinity vainly trying to pick him up.

All of the northern islands were covered with a white blanket of ice and snow, and in some places floating ice was two to three inches thick. It was the severest weather encountered on any patrol up to that time. The first attack came on 13 March when two torpedoes found their mark in a medium freighter, the SHOJIN MARU. The ship stopped and settled by the stern. Subsequent torpedoes exploded prematurely and the third went too deep. TAUTOG opened up with her deck gun until the bridge and after deck house were demolished and about eight holes ventilated her sides.

Another ship was sighted coming over the horizon similar to the first ship and the "Terrible T" made a submerged approach to rip into her sides with a hit from a spread of three torpedoes. The RYUA MARU, 1915 tons

sank in short order. Subsequent observations on the first target disclosed her down by the stern, listing heavily with a fire burning merrily. Distant explosions were heard during the next half hour and a glow on the horizon indicated that the Japanese would never use the ship again.

Off the coast of Hokkaido a radar contact was made on a convoy in the afternoon of 16 March. As TAUTOG approached there appeared to be about seven ships. She maneuvered to fire a spread of four torpedoes at a ship on the starboard flank with another ship almost in line beyond the first ship. After firing, an escort started to approach the sub and she was forced to dive after observing the first torpedo explode with tremendous force in the first ship. Two more hits were heard on the second ship in the same line of bearing. Considerable breaking-up noises with explosions were heard through the hull and on the sound equipment from the direction of the targets.

Upon surfacing, the ships which had stopped from torpedo hits apparently went under, for they were not in sight. The "Terrible T" wasted no time in pursuing the remaining ships of the convoy and maneuvered again for an attack on the starboard flank. Three torpedoes popped out after a medium-sized freighter and the sub swung around quickly for a spread of four torpedoes from the stern tubes as a violent explosion ripped into the medium-sized freighter. Three explosions resulted from the stern tube spread. Two were on the target ship and the third was undetermined. The medium-sized ship was dead in the water and sinking and the second ship disappeared from the radar screen.

Only four ships were now left in the convoy and a Japanese destroyer became very interested in shortening the career of TAUTOG at this time. For the next hour and a half, fourteen heavy explosions sounding like depth charges shocked through the water not too close to the sub. During this evasion of death, contact with the dwindling Japanese convoy was lost. TAUTOG ended this very successful patrol as she slipped into port at Midway Island on 23 March.

Commander Sieglaff was relieved as commanding officer of the doughty TAUTOG by Lieutenant Commander T. S. Baskett on 8 April 1944. Apparently the "powers-that-be" had been favorably impressed by the previous patrol in iceberg circuit and TAUTOG was again assigned to go penguin spotting along the Kurile Islands, East Coast of Hokkaido and the Northeast Coast of Honshu. The sub departed Midway on 17 April and set a great circle course to Paramushiru.

Off the southern tip of Matsuwa on 2 May, TAUTOG spotted a 6000-ton freighter of the RYOYO MARU Class in a small harbor between Banjo To and Matsuwa To. Four torpedoes were fired at a range of 2000 yards. One hit completely obscured the ship with spray. An hour later two more torpedoes sizzled into the harbor to score another hit. A light haze was seen around the target which had settled deeper into the water until the decks were almost awash. Numerous angles on the ship showed her in a spot charted at 3-3/4 fathoms. The ship was drawing every inch of that when last seen.

At dawn the following morning, TAUTOG made a radar contact in the fog. An approach and successful track made a set-up for four torpedoes. Two of them hit! The sub circled to make follow-up shots and had a little difficulty

getting a satisfactory set-up. The difficulty was explained when TAUTOG began to sight gasoline drums, debris and life rafts. The ship was on an altogether new course with a 30-degree dive angle, bow under the water up to the bridge and the stern high in the air with the screw still turning over. A number of Japanese were eagerly fumbling with a deck gun on the fantail and the smart sub skipper came hard left to get astern of the ship where the gun could not depress.

After considerable shouting at the 20 millimeter gunner, who wanted to shoot at a Japanese on a life raft who was shaking his fist at the sub, the 20 millimeter managed to spray the ship's deck with about a dozen rounds of 20 millimeter fire before the gun jammed. The 20 millimeter shells kept the Japanese ducking until the sub passed safely astern until the ship was lost in the fog with her propeller still helplessly twirling in the air. The sunken ship was the cargo ship, FUSHIMI MARU, 4,935 tons.

On 8 May a nondescript collection of ships was sighted heading from southward toward Esan Saki. An approach was made and the largest freighter was selected as the recipient of three torpedoes. One of these hit the ship, and white clouds of steam rose from the stack. The ship swung around, nearly stopped but showed no other effects of the hit. Two more fish were selected to liven up the show and the one hit scored from the second spread did the trick. When the smoke had cleared, the stern was submerged and the bow was up in the air. This was the 3,944 ton passenger-cargo ship, MIYAZAKI MARU.

Escorts were after TAUTOG by this time and the sub proceeded out of restricted waters along her only escape route. The escorts kept her company for about seven hours dropping depth charges intermittently.

A small convoy hove into view on 12 May and the larger of two freighters was honored with the last three bow torpedoes. Two hits obscured the target with smoke and the attention was quickly turned to the smaller freighter. It was not worth a stern tube shot so TAUTOG spun around to see if the big freighter needed another torpedo; she did not. Only a thin cloud of smoke marked the spot where the BANEJ MARU # 2, 1186 ton cargo ship had been.

TAUTOG proceeded to Pearl Harbor via the great circle route to arrive on 21 May for a refit period. By 23 June the sub was on her way to her twelfth war patrol via Midway. The patrol area included the east coasts of Hokkaido and Honshu, including the area south of Tokyo Bay. On 8 July a small freighter took the TAUTOG torpedo treatment under her poop deck. There was little apparent damage other than stopping the ship in the water. The sub circled and administered the second treatment which resulted in the final "cure". A torpedo struck amidships causing the ship to fold up and sink. Only one survivor could be found in the water. He was blue with cold and when questioned identified the ship as MATSU MARU, 887 tons, carrying a load of lumber from Tokyo to Muroran.

A trawler was sighted in the heavy fog of 9 July and the five inch gun opened up on the vessel. After the first round, the gun had a misfire and the 20 millimeter finished the job. When last seen the trawler's decks were awash and she was sinking fast.

While patrolling on the surface in the vicinity of Samusu Shima on 19 July, TAUTOG sighted the top of a steamer coming over the horizon. She dived immediately, identified the ship as a coastal vessel of several hundred tons, and made a battle surface. The seas made the deck slippery and unsteady but finally, 21 rounds of 5-inch shells started the vessel burning briskly. A few ineffective bursts of machine gun fire came toward TAUTOG and shortly thereafter an explosion blew off the stern of the ship. Several prisoners were picked up from a swamped lifeboat and the original prisoner had by now become a pretty fair interpreter. Through him it was learned that the vessel was called the HOKORIU MARU, 148 ton naval miscellaneous auxiliary, carrying coconut oil from the Bonin Islands to Tokyo.

August 2nd brought several ships into view three miles off the coast of Miki Saki. Three torpedoes raced toward a freighter from 800 yards. The first explosion obscured the target with white smoke and the second hit raised a column of black smoke. When the smoke had cleared, the KONEI MARU, 1922 tons had sunk. TAUTOG went deep as the escort vessels headed her way. A few depth charges rattled the sub a bit but TAUTOG soon evaded the escorts.

The patrol ended as the sub arrived at Midway on 10 August 1944. Upon arriving at Midway on 10 August all aboard the "Terrible T" were overjoyed to hear that the sub was on her way to California for an overhaul at the Bethlehem Steel Company's Submarine Repair Basin. An excellent job was done and TAUTOG, after trials in the San Francisco Bay area, departed for San Diego and Pearl Harbor for training before starting out on her 13th war patrol. Departing Pearl Harbor on 17 December 1944, TAUTOG stopped briefly at Midway and headed for the East China Sea off the West Coast of Kyushu.

On 17 January a ship was sighted heading toward the sub. When it came closer it was duly greeted with a spread of three torpedoes. One hit ripped into the forward part of the ship and blew off the bow from the bridge forward. The ship stopped in the water and was identified as a loaded high speed transport. The transport refused to sink and another torpedo was fired at her from 700 yards. The ship disintegrated into high-flying debris and column of smoke several hundred feet high. This was the 1500 ton LANDING SHIP, VEHICLE #15.

The bright moonlight of 26-21 January revealed a Japanese ship at 10,000 yards. TAUTOG approached from the dark side and fired two torpedoes into the ship. The ship was observed to sink and the submarine came in close to investigate. The moon had set by this time and debris could be vaguely seen and shouting from the water indicated survivors. One well-chilled, but otherwise intact survivor was brought aboard and was found to be a seaman first class whose station was at the depth charge racks. The ship was the SHURI MARU, Motor Torpedo Boat Tender, an armed naval auxiliary of 1857-tons with a navy crew of 120. The ship was bound from Tsingtao to Sasebo.

During the afternoon of 21 January a Japanese tanker came straight in toward TAUTOG out of the sun where it was almost impossible to see him. Two torpedoes hit the ship and the target stopped as the Japanese aboard ran frantically up and down the catwalk. Smoke started to pour out of the ship and beautiful breaking-up noises were heard through the

hull. The ship showed no tendency to sink and several more torpedoes were fired at her until another hit was scored. Although the target, ZUIUN MARU, did not sink, she was heavily damaged.

On her way back to Midway, TAUTOG destroyed a wooden trawler with five-inch shells and 20 millimeter fire. The target was left awash and burning. The submarine continued on to Midway to arrived on 1 February 1945. The commanding officer, officers and crew of TAUTOG were congratulated by the Commander Submarine Force, Pacific Fleet for another aggressive patrol added to the long illustrious combat record of the submarine. In her thirteen patrols TAUTOG had sunk twenty-six ships for a total of 71,751-tons.

After completion of a refit period, she was assigned the highly important task of furnishing target and training services for anti-submarine forces. At this time Lieutenant Commander A. H. Higgs became the new skipper of the submarine, having relieved the very successful Commander T. S. Baskett.

Her first training duty came in Pearl Harbor where TAUTOG worked with the aircraft training units for a period of about six weeks. Orders were received to proceed to San Diego for further training duty. Leaving Pearl Harbor on 2 April, the "Terrible T" arrived in San Diego one week later with battle flags flying. Since a state of war existed, few knew of her arrival, but those who were there to witness the scene were mighty proud of our submarine force in general, and the TAUTOG in particular. No one at the time knew that they were looking at the ship which sank the largest number of Japanese vessels of any ship in the world.

By Directive dated April 1947, the USS TAUTOG (SS-199), was transferred to the NINTH Naval District to train Naval Reserverists. She is Out of Commission - in service status. Assigned to immobile service at Naval Recruit Training Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

In view of her outstanding combat record, the USS TAUTOG has been awarded the Navy Unit Commendation, the text of which reads as follows:

"For outstanding heroism in action against Japanese combatant and merchant shipping during the Second, Fifth, Sixth, Eighth, Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh War Patrols in enemy-controlled waters of the Pacific. Searching restricted sectors relentlessly for targets worthy of her fire, the USS TAUTOG boldly defied strong surface and air opposition to develop contacts and launch her deadly torpedoes against heavily escorted hostile convoys. A stouthearted fighter, handled superbly by her skilled and gallant officers and men, she has carried the offensive to the enemy with indomitable aggressiveness since the first difficult and dangerous months of the war when Japanese strength was at its height. She has sunk three submarines, numerous tankers, freighters and transports and has destroyed or severely damaged many other hostile vessels in her valiant efforts to disrupt the flow of supplies to beleaguered forces of the enemy---and to shatter his ability to wage war. Although repeatedly depth-charged and pursued for long periods, the TAUTOG has achieved an illustrious combat record attesting the valor and superb seamanship of her ship's company and

reflecting the highest credit upon the United States Naval Service."

USS TAUTOG earned fourteen Battle Stars on the Asiatic-Pacific Area Service Ribbon for participating in the following operations:

- 1 Star/Pearl Harbor-Midway--7 December 1941
- 1 Star/Anti-submarine Assessment -- 26 April 1942
- 1 Star/Anti-submarine Assessment-- 17 May 1942
- 1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific - 17 July to 10 September 1942
- 1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific - 8 October to 21 November 1942
- 1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific - 15 December 42 to 30 January 1943
- 1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific - 24 February to 19 April 1943
- 1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific - 11 May to 4 July 1943
- 1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific - 7 October to 18 November 1943
- 1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific - 12 December 43 to 30 January 1944
- 1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific - 24 February to 23 March 1944
- 1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific - 17 April to 21 May 1944
- 1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific - 23 June to 10 August 1944
- 1 Star/Submarine War Patrol - Pacific - 17 December 44 to 1 February 45

STATISTICS

OVERALL LENGTH	307 feet, 2 inches
EXTREME BEAM	27 feet, 3 inches
SPEED	21 knots
ESTIMATED DISPLACEMENT	1,475 tons

Restencilled - October 1950
Corrected - 16 October 1956